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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [SNAR](#) [GH](#)
SUBJECT: MILLS FIRES HEAD OF POLICE IN SHAKEUP OF SECURITY
SERVICES; RAWLINGS OFFERS ADVICE

Classified By: POLCHIEF GPERGL FOR REASONS 1.4 B and D

¶1. (C) Summary. President Mills has made changes in key security service leadership positions, retiring the Inspector General of Police, Patrick Acheampong and the Chief of Defense Staff as of January 28. The President has also named a new director for the country's Narcotics Control Board. The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Ms. Elizabeth Mills Robertson, has been named acting head of the police service. The acting Chief of the Defense Staff is Admiral A.R.S. Nunoo, who replaces the former head, Army Lt. General J.B. Danquah. The dismissals and appointments happened to coincide with a call by former President J.J. Rawlings for the dismissal of the security chiefs. Rawlings accused the new administration of moving too slowly to replace NPP appointees in the security services and civil administration. The timing, at best unfortunate, contributes to the perception that Mills is weak and responds to Rawlings' criticism. Earlier this month President Mills appointed a police veteran, Robert Ayaligo, to head the Narcotics Control Board. End Summary.

2.(C) The dismissal of Patrick Acheampong as Inspector General of Police (IGP) was expected. New presidents in Ghana have traditionally replaced the IGP, and Acheampong's tenure has been controversial. Police corruption, including the theft of narcotics from a police evidence storage facility, tarnished his time as IGP, and allegations of his complicity-- or alternatively, lack of competency --in dealing with narcotics issues left him vulnerable. Acheampong was also seen as sympathetic to the NPP. The acting IGP, Ms. Elizabeth Mills Robertson, is likely to be a caretaker only. She is reportedly close to the former head of the Bureau of National Security, Francis Poku, whose disagreements with former President Kufuor led Poku to skip house arrest and flee into exile in London. A possible replacement as IGP is Paul Quaye, the Commissioner of Police for Technical Services.

¶3. (C) Mills also announced the retirement of the Ghana Armed Forces Chief of Defense Staff, Army Lt. General J.B. Danquah. Danquah has been replaced on an interim basis by Admiral A.R.S. Nunoo. (NOTE: Sources available to the Mission's DAO report it unlikely that Nunoo will be more than an interim head of the armed forces. END NOTE.)

¶4. (C) According to media reports, former President Rawlings on January 23 visited Accra's international airport, where he observed what he assessed were security lapses. Using this as an opportunity, Rawlings called for the immediate dismissal of security chiefs appointed by the NPP government, saying that among other things, they had lost the respect of their subordinates. Appearing on Accra's Joy FM radio, Rawlings said that, "it seems as if Kufuor is the only person who's been removed but the oppressive machinery is still intact." (NOTE: This is not the first time Rawlings has criticized Mills for not moving fast enough to dismiss NPP

holdovers. Last week Rawlings was critical of the new government for not immediately replacing district officials appointed by the NPP government. END NOTE.).

15. (SBU) Prior to naming both an IGP and a Chief of Defense Staff, the President constitutionally must first consult with the Council of State. The Council is a twenty-five member body composed of representatives from the ten regions, eleven presidential appointments, and four ex officio members, including a former IGP, CDS, and chief justice, plus the President of the National House of Chiefs. While the President is not obliged to take the Council's advice, he is required to seek it prior to certain decisions. The Council of State is also being reconstituted, with the selection of the regional members due in mid-February. Until that time, permanent appointments to the IGP and CDS positions will not be possible.

16. (SBU) In one of his first appointments, in early January Mills named Robert Ayalingo to head the Narcotics Control Board (NACOB). Ayalingo has over twenty years of experience with the Ghana Police Service, including spending 1989-2001 with the Police Narcotics Unit. He has also worked in police intelligence and as a regional superintendent of police in the Upper West region, and has attended DEA sponsored training courses. Ayalingo replaces Benjamin Botwe, who had been acting head of the NACOB for the past year; Botwe returns to his former job as Deputy Chief of the Ghana Food and Drug Board. Ayalingo told POLOFF and DEA Country Attaché that developing NACOB's intelligence gathering capacity was a priority for him, and he asked for USG assistance in building this capacity.

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17. (C) COMMENT. President Mills is methodically replacing NPP holdovers, but not at a pace fast enough for former President Rawlings. Rawlings' comments in the media are contributing to a perception that Mills is indecisive at best and at worst, quick to take orders from the former president. In neither case is it helpful for Mills, who in his inaugural address just three weeks ago pledged a forward looking government that would forego a widespread witch hunt of former NPP officials. Rawlings' unwillingness to hold his tongue undercuts Mills' authority as president, and gives the NPP the ammunition they need to plant the perception in the public's mind that Mills is merely a stand in for Rawlings. On a more positive note, the early appointment of a career law enforcement official to head the NACOB should be a step forward, and in any case demonstrates an interest by Mills in strengthening the agency.

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